

From "I want to be a poet" to "I am a Poet."

Career Steps to Literary Recognition:

1. Read widely in poetry of the past and present.
2. Study poetic techniques and elements of poetry.
3. Learn the mechanics of submission and professional conduct.
4. Familiarize yourself with the range of markets in a recent edition of *Poet's Market*. (Buy sample copies of publications and study them.)
5. Begin submitting your work. Choose those markets in the (I) category and (IV) categories that reflect your tastes and special interests. Often it is best to start with publications in your area.
6. Attend poetry readings; acquaint yourself with resources such as libraries, clubs and organizations.
7. Attend writers' workshops and conferences; build relationships with poets and editors.
8. Enter contests and competitions judiciously, but concentrate on magazine publication. Avoid vanity scams.
9. As you begin getting acceptances from magazines, try the (II) category markets that seem to share your tastes.
10. Network with your peers. Find out where they are publishing; exchange experience and tips.
11. Consider publishing a chapbook, perhaps through a competition, to have copies available to sell at readings.
12. When you have a dozen or more poems published in respected magazines, apply for a listing in Poets & Writers' directory. Look for first-book competitions to enter.
13. Put together a book manuscript of published and unpublished poems. Find out from *Poet's Market* and your network associations the most likely presses to consider.
14. Check with your state arts council about individual grants. Apply for the national Endowment of the Arts individual grants. Apply for a Guggenheim. Explore the possibility of foreign travel.

Based on "1990 Poet's market: Where and how to publish your poetry," *Writer's Digest*, 1989.